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REMARKS

The present response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of objection and/or rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Applicants assert that the present invention is new, non-obvious and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. Claims 1-19 have been rejected. Claims 1, 3, 9, 11, and 19 have been amended.

CLAIM REJECTIONS

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 9-14 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as being anticipated by Pio (U.S. Patent No. 6,643,184). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1-19 due to the fact that the cited reference neither teaches nor suggests all the limitations recited in independent claims 1, 9 and 19. More specifically, all the pending independent claims included the limitation of "an erase pulse having a substantially non-flat voltage profile", where as the Examiner's reference only teaches a the use of a trapezoidal shaped erase pulse, which erase pulse has a substantially flat portion which appears to comprise the majority of the pulse width.

However, in the interest of furthering the prosecution of the present application, and in order to more clearly define features of the present claims from the prior art, Applicant has amended each of the amended independent claims (1, 9 and 19) to recite:

1. "A method of erasing one or more non-volatile memory ("NVM") cells comprising:
applying to the one or more NVM cells an erase pulse having a predominantly non-flat

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voltage profile."

9. "A circuit for erasing one or more non-volatile memory ("NVM") cells comprising: an erase pulse source to produce an erase pulse having a **predominantly** non-flat voltage profile."

19. "A system for erasing one or more non-volatile memory ("NVM") cells comprising: A NVM array, and an erase pulse source to produce an erase pulse having a **predominantly** non-flat voltage profile."

Conversely, the relied upon prior art teaches a trapezoidal erase pulse having a substantial flat portions between the up-ramp and down-ramp.

As is well established, in order to successfully assert a prima facie case of anticipation, the Examiner must provide a single prior art document that includes every element and limitation of the claim or claims being rejected. Applicant respectfully asserts that the cited reference is not sufficient as a single prior art document for the purpose of establishing a prima facie case of anticipation. The cited reference neither teaches nor suggests every element and limitation of independent claims 1, 9 and 19, namely an erase pulse with a **predominantly non-flat voltage profile**.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 9 and 19 are allowable over the cited reference. All claims depending therefrom, including those rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, are also considered allowable by virtue of their dependence on allowable base claims.

Applicant notes that none of the amendments to the claims herein are in response to the above discussed prior art rejections. As mentioned, the trapezoid shaped erase pulse of the cited reference has a substantially flat portion as part of its voltage profile. However, in the interest of avoiding disputes over semantics, Applicant has voluntarily amended the pending independent claims to more clearly define the claimed invention.

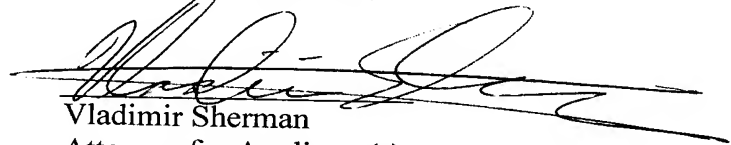
In view of the foregoing remarks, all the pending claims are considered to be allowable. Their favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

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Should the Examiner have any question or comment as to the form, content or entry of this Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number below. Similarly, if there are any further issues yet to be resolved to advance the prosecution of this application to issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned counsel.

Please charge any fees associated with this paper to deposit account No. 50-3400.

Respectfully submitted,


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